



Indiana State
Department of Health

For Immediate Release

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ALL 92 INDIANA COUNTIES COMPLETE LOCAL PANDEMIC INFLUENZA RESPONSE PLANS

Indianapolis – The State of Indiana has reached another milestone in its pandemic influenza preparedness efforts with the completion of local pandemic influenza response plans by all 92 counties.

At the Pandemic Influenza State Summit earlier this year, Governor Daniels challenged all Indiana counties to create local plans for responding to a possible influenza pandemic. County officials used guidance and templates provided by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security in the development of the plans, which include specific roles and responsibilities for various local agencies that might be involved in such a response.

“Since a possible influenza pandemic would be a worldwide event, it is crucial that plans are developed at the local level because the extent of state or federal assistance would be quite limited,” said Indiana Department of Homeland Security Executive Director Eric Dietz. “We also know that a possible influenza pandemic will require a multi-discipline response, which also requires advance planning and coordination among all local agencies.”

The plans go beyond public health-related issues to also include issues related to other essential government services. Since a pandemic could potentially affect a large percentage of the population, the plans also consider how those services will continue to be provided with a drastically reduced workforce.

“While it is not possible to predict when a pandemic will occur or the severity of the next pandemic, it is possible to plan and prepare ahead of time,” said State Health Commissioner Judith A. Monroe, M.D. “It will be critical for local public health agencies to work closely with their local partners in order to provide an effective response for the communities they serve.”

State officials are still encouraging citizens to also take steps to prepare themselves and their families from the threat of a possible influenza pandemic. An emergency supplies kit is recommended in case a pandemic results in requests or orders for citizens to “shelter in place.” This kit should include a two-week supply of food and water, as well as other necessities such as medications. As always, citizens should also take common sense prevention steps such as:

- Covering their mouths with their arm or a tissue, rather than their hands, when they sneeze or cough.

- Washing hands frequently and thoroughly, especially after sneezing, coughing, or using the bathroom.
- Staying home from work or school when feeling ill.
- Seeking medical advice and care as needed.

More planning tips and information can be found at www.pandemicflu.gov. A link to that site and other information can also be found on the State of Indiana's influenza information Web site at www.fluinfo.in.gov.

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